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IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 2, 13, 15, 16 and 23-26, in accordance with the following listing showing the status of all claims in the application.

1.   (Currently Amended) A method utilizing a computer to predict a value of a target variable based on predictions of other variables, said method comprising:

obtaining historically realized values for the target variable at each of plural time points;

obtaining a first set of predicted values for each of plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables, the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables being different from the target variable, and the first set of predicted values comprising predictions of what future values of the ~~predictor~~ baseline variables will be;

obtaining a second set of predicted values for each of the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables, the second set of predicted values having been predicted subsequent to prediction of the first set of predicted values and also comprising predictions of what future values of the ~~predictor~~ baseline variables will be;

generating a forecasting model by fitting the first set of predicted values for the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables to the historically realized values for the target variable; and

utilizing a computer to generate a predicted value for the target variable from the second set of predicted values for at least a subset of the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables using the forecasting model,

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wherein the target variable is an observable and verifiable value of at least one

of: (i) an existing asset or (ii) a financial and/or economic measure that represents an

aspect of an existing economic environment, and

wherein the predicted value for the target variable is a prediction of what a future

value of the target variable will be.

2.   (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the first set

of predicted values for the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables comprise predictions of

values for the ~~predictor~~ baseline variables at each of the plural different time points.

3.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the

forecasting model is generated by using a statistical curve fitting technique.

4.   (Original) A method according to Claim 3, wherein the statistical curve

fitting technique comprises at least one of a stepwise linear regression technique and a

nonlinear regression technique.

5.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the

forecasting model is generated by using at least one of a neural network technique and

a genetic algorithm technique.

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6.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the forecasting model is generated by identifying parameters for a template model, and wherein parameters of the forecasting model comprise weighting coefficients.

7.   (Original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the target variable is a measure of a value of a financial asset.

8.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, further comprising a step of finding a difference between the predicted value for the target variable and a second predicted value for the target variable which is predicted using a second technique that is different than said predicting step, so as to obtain an estimate of information that is specific to the target variable.

9.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 8, wherein the second technique is a combination forecast of the value of the target variable.

10.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 8, further comprising a step of using the estimate of information that is specific to the target variable to predict an effect of said information on a second variable that is different than the target variable.

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11. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 1, further comprising a step of finding a difference between the predicted value of the target variable and an actual value realized for the target variable.

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 11, further comprising a step of using the difference between the predicted value of the target variable and the actual value realized for the target variable to predict an effect of information on a second variable that is different than the target variable.

13. (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the first set of predicted values for the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables comprise predictions of each of the ~~predictor~~ baseline variables at time points that are contemporaneous with the plural time points.

14. (Original) A method according to Claim 1, wherein the target variable is a measure of a value of an asset.

15. (Currently Amended) A method utilizing a computer to predict a value of a target variable based on predictions of other variables, said method comprising:

obtaining historically realized values for the target variable at each of plural different time points;

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obtaining a first set of predicted values for each of plural ~~predictor~~ baseline

variables, the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables being different from the target variable,

and the first set of predicted values comprising predictions of what future values of the

~~predictor~~ baseline variables will be;

obtaining a second set of predicted values for each of the plural ~~predictor~~baseline

variables, the second set of predicted values having been predicted subsequent to

prediction of the first set of predicted values and also comprising predictions of what

future values of the ~~predictor~~ baseline variables will be;

identifying a subset of the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables whose first set of

predicted values provide a best fit to the historically realized values for the target

variable; and

utilizing a computer to generate a predicted value for the target variable from the

second set of predicted values for the subset of the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables

identified in said identifying step,

wherein the target variable is an observable and verifiable value of at least one

of: (i) an existing asset or (ii) a financial and/or economic measure that represents an

aspect of an existing economic environment, and

wherein the predicted value for the target variable is a prediction of what a future

value of the target variable will be.

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16.   (Currently Amended) A method according to Claim 15, wherein the first set of predicted values for the plural ~~predictor~~ <u>baseline</u> variables comprise predictions of values for the ~~predictor~~ <u>baseline</u> variables at time points that are contemporaneous with the plural different time points.

17.   (Original) A method according to Claim 15, wherein the target variable is a measure of a value of an asset.

18.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 15, further comprising a step of finding a difference between the predicted value for the target variable and a second predicted value for the target variable that has been predicted using a second technique that is different than said predicting step, so as to obtain an estimate of information that is specific to the target variable.

19.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, wherein the second technique is a combination forecast of the value of the target variable.

20.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 18, further comprising a step of using the estimate of information that is specific to the target variable to predict an effect of said information on a second variable that is different than the target variable.

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21.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 15, further

comprising a step of finding a difference between the predicted value for the target

variable and an actual value realized for the target variable.

22.   (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 21, further

comprising a step of using the difference between the predicted value for the target

variable and the actual value realized for the target variable to predict an effect of

information on a second variable that is different than the target variable.

23.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium encoded with

computer-executable process steps for predicting a value of a target variable based on

predictions of other variables, wherein said computer-executable process steps include

steps to:

obtain historically realized values for the target variable at each of plural time

points;

obtain a first set of predicted values for each of plural ~~predictor~~ baseline

variables, the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables being different from the target variable,

and the first set of predicted values comprising predictions of what future values of the

~~predictor~~ baseline variables will be;

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obtain a second set of predicted values for each of the plural ~~predictor~~ <u>baseline</u>

variables, the second set of predicted values having been predicted subsequent to

prediction of the first set of predicted values and also comprising predictions of what

future values of the ~~predictor~~ <u>baseline</u> variables will be;

generate a forecasting model by fitting the first set of predicted values for the

plural ~~predictor~~ <u>baseline</u> variables to the historically realized values for the target

variable; and

generate a predicted value for the target variable from the second set of

predicted values for at least a subset of the plural ~~predictor~~ <u>baseline</u> variables using the

forecasting model,

wherein the target variable is an observable and verifiable value of at least one

of: (i) an existing asset or (ii) a financial and/or economic measure that represents an

aspect of an existing economic environment, and

wherein the predicted value for the target variable is a prediction of what a future

value of the target variable will be.

24.   (Currently Amended) An apparatus for predicting a value of a target

variable based on predictions of other variables, said apparatus comprising:

a processor for executing stored program instruction steps; and

a memory connected to the processor for storing the program instruction steps,

wherein the program instruction steps include steps to:

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(a)   obtain historically realized values for the target variable at each of plural time points;

(b)   obtain a first set of predicted values for each of plural ~~predictor~~baseline variables, the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables being different from the target variable, and the first set of predicted values comprising predictions of what future values of the ~~predictor~~ baseline variables will be;

(c)   obtain a second set of predicted values for each of the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables, the second set of predicted values having been predicted subsequent to prediction of the first set of predicted values and also comprising predictions of what future values of the ~~predictor~~ baseline variables will be;

(d)   generate a forecasting model by fitting the first set of predicted values for the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables to the historically realized values for the target variable; and

(e)   generate a predicted value for the target variable from the second set of predicted values for at least a subset of the plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables using the forecasting model,

wherein the target variable is an observable and verifiable value of at least one of: (i) an existing asset or (ii) a financial and/or economic measure that represents an aspect of an existing economic environment, and

wherein the predicted value for the target variable is a prediction of what a future value of the target variable will be.

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25. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the first set of predicted values and the second set of predicted values for each of plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables are based on forecasts from a plurality of different individuals.

26. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 15, wherein the first set of predicted values and the second set of predicted values for each of plural ~~predictor~~ baseline variables are based on forecasts from a plurality of different individuals.

27. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of engaging in an asset transaction based on the predicted value for the target variable, said asset transaction comprising at least one of selling an asset and purchasing the asset.

28. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 15, wherein said identifying step is performed by using stepwise linear regression.

29. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 15, further comprising a step of engaging in an asset transaction based on the predicted value for

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the target variable, said asset transaction comprising at least one of selling an asset

and purchasing the asset.

30.   (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the

forecasting model is generated by identifying parameters for a template model.